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# Republic of Kenya

## County Government of Siaya



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### Visitors

Siaya County is an area of great geographic, cultural and natural diversity, offering tourists just as much, if not more, than many of Kenya's better known tourist areas.



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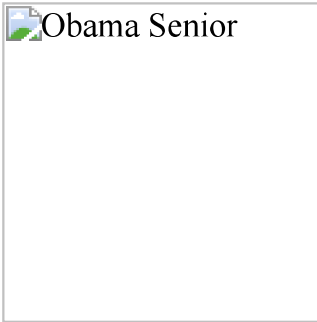
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# Obama Senior

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## Obama Senior


 Obama Senior

Obama was born in Rachuonyo District on the shores of Lake Victoria just outside Kendu Bay, Kenya Colony, at the time a colony of the British Empire. He was raised in the village of Nyang'oma Kogelo, Siaya District, Nyanza Province. His family are members of the Luo ethnic group. His father was Onyango (later Hussein) Obama (1895-1979), and his mother, Habiba Akumu Nyanjango of Karabondi, Kenya, was his second wife. After Akumu separated from her husband Hussein and left the family in 1945, the boy Barack Obama was raised by his father Hussein's third wife, Sarah Ogwel of Kogelo. Before working as a cook for missionaries and local herbalist in Nairobi, Barack Obama's father Onyango had traveled widely, enlisting in the British colonial forces and visiting Europe, India, and Zanzibar. There he converted from Roman Catholicism to Islam and took the name Hussein. In 1949, after becoming more politically active, Onyango was jailed by the British for six months due to his working for the Kenyan independence movement. According to Sarah Onyango Obama, her husband Hussein Onyango was subjected to beatings and abuse; it resulted in permanent physical disabilities and his loathing of the British.

Obama was raised in a Muslim family. When he was about six years old and attending a Christian missionary school, the boy converted to Anglicanism when strongly encouraged by the staff. He changed his name from "Baraka" to the more Christian-sounding "Barack". While still living near Kendu Bay, Obama attended Gendia Primary School. After his family moved to Siaya District, he transferred to Ng'iya Intermediate School. From 1950 to 1953, he studied at Maseno National School, an exclusive Anglican boarding school in Maseno. The head teacher, B.L. Bowers, described Obama in his records as "very keen, steady, trustworthy and friendly. Concentrates, reliable and out-going."

In 1954 at the age of eighteen, Obama married Kezia Aoko in a tribal ceremony. They had two children, Malik (a.k.a. Roy) and Auma, during the early years of their marriage. Later, after Obama had married a third time, Kezia had two more sons, Abo and Bernard who are thought to be Obama's children. In his memoir, *Dreams from My Father*, Obama said that his father's family questions whether Abo and Bernard are his biological sons. College and graduate school

In 1959, Obama received a scholarship in economics through a program organized by the nationalist leader Tom Mboya. The program offered education in the West to outstanding Kenyan students. Initial financial supporters of the program included Harry Belafonte, Sidney Poitier, Jackie Robinson, and Elizabeth Mooney Kirk, a literacy advocate who provided most of the financial support for Obama's early years in the United States. Funds provided the next year by John F. Kennedy's family paid off old debts of the project and subsidized student stipends, indirectly benefiting Obama and other members of the 1959 group of scholarship holders. When Obama left for America, he left behind his young wife, Kezia, and their baby son, Malik. Kezia was also pregnant, and their daughter, Auma, was born while her father was in Hawaii.

In September 1959, Obama enrolled at the University of Hawaii at Manoa in Honolulu as the university's first African foreign student. He initially lived across the street from the university at the Charles H. Atherton branch of the YMCA at 1810 University Avenue; public records from 1961 indicate he later had a residence two miles southeast of the university at 625 11th Avenue in the Kaimuki neighborhood. In September 1960, Obama met Stanley Ann Dunham in a basic Russian language course at the University of Hawaii. Dunham dropped out of the University of Hawaii after the fall 1960 semester after becoming pregnant, while Obama continued his education. Obama married Dunham in Wailuku on the Hawaiian island of Maui on 2 February 1961. He eventually told Dunham about his previous marriage in Kenya, but said he was divorced—which she found out years later was a lie.

Obama and Dunham's son, Barack II, was born in Honolulu on 4 August 1961 at the old Kapiolani

Maternity and Gynecological Hospital—a predecessor of the Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women and Children. His birth was announced in *The Honolulu Advertiser* and the *Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, with his parents' address listed as 6085 Kalaniana'ole Highway in the Kuliouou neighborhood of Honolulu, seven miles east of the university—the rented home of Dunham's parents, Stanley and Madelyn Dunham. Soon after his birth, Dunham took her son to Seattle, Washington, where she took classes at the University of Washington from September 1961 to June 1962. Obama continued his education at the University of Hawaii and in 1961–1962 lived one mile east of the university in the St. Louis Heights neighborhood. He graduated from the University of Hawaii after three years with a B.A. in economics and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and left Hawaii in June 1962.

In September 1962, after a tour of mainland U.S. universities, Obama traveled to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he began a graduate fellowship in economics at Harvard University and rented an apartment in a rooming house near Central Square in Cambridge. Meanwhile, Dunham and their son returned to Honolulu in the latter half of 1962, and she resumed her undergraduate education in January 1963 in the spring semester at the University of Hawaii. In January 1964, Dunham filed for divorce in Honolulu; the divorce was not contested by Obama. In 1965, Dunham married Lolo Soetoro, a Javanese surveyor whom she had met at the East-West Center. Obama was forced to leave his Ph.D. program at Harvard University in May 1964 (and received an A.M. in economics from Harvard in 1965). In June 1964, Obama met and began dating a 27-year-old Jewish American elementary school teacher named Ruth Beatrice Baker, the daughter of prosperous Lithuanian immigrants to the United States.

Obama returned to Kenya in August 1964. Baker followed him, and they married 24 December 1964. They had two sons together, Mark Okoth Obama in 1965 and David Opiyo Obama in 1968. Baker and Obama separated in 1971, and divorced in 1973. Baker subsequently married a Tanzanian named Ndesandjo and took his surname, as did her sons Mark and David. Mark said in 2009 that Obama had been abusive to him, his late brother David, and his mother. After working for an oil company, Obama served as an economist in the Kenyan Ministry of Transport. He later was promoted to senior economist in the Kenyan Ministry of Finance. In 1959, a monograph written by him had been published by the Kenyan Department of Education, entitled *Otieno jarieko. Kitabu mar ariyo. 2: Yore mabeyo mag puro puothe.* (English: *Otieno, the wise man. Book 2: Wise ways of farming.*) That same year, Obama published a paper entitled "Problems Facing Our Socialism" in the *East Africa Journal*, harshly criticizing the blueprint for national planning, "African Socialism and Its Applicability to Planning in Kenya", which had been produced by Tom Mboya's Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. The article was signed "Barak H. Obama." In December 1971, Obama was still recuperating after an almost year-long hospitalization following an automobile accident. He made a month-long trip to Hawaii, during which he visited with his ex-wife Ann and son Barack II. The visit was the last time the boy would see his father. On that trip Obama took his son to his first jazz concert, a performance by the pianist Dave Brubeck.

President Obama recalled his father giving him his first basketball: I only remember my father for one month my whole life, when I was 10. And it wasn't until much later in life that I realized, like, he gave me my first basketball and it was shortly thereafter that I became this basketball fanatic. And he took me to my first jazz concert and it was sort of shortly thereafter that I became really interested in jazz and music. So what it makes you realize how much of an impact [even if it's only a month] that they have on you. But I think probably the most important thing was his absence I think contributed to me really wanting to be a good dad, you know? Because I think not having him there made me say to myself 'you know what I want to make sure my girls feel like they've got somebody they can rely on. According to his son's memoir, Obama's conflict with President Jomo Kenyatta destroyed the economist's career. The decline began after Tom Mboya was assassinated in 1969. After Kenyatta fired Obama he was blacklisted in Kenya and found it impossible to get work. He began to drink heavily and had a serious car accident in 1970, requiring almost a year in the hospital. By the time he visited his son in

Hawaii in late 1971, he had a bad leg. Obama's life deteriorated into drinking and poverty, from which he never recovered. His friend, journalist Philip Ochieng, has described Obama's difficult personality and drinking problems in the Kenya newspaper, Daily Nation.

Obama later lost both legs in a second serious automobile accident, and subsequently lost his job. He fathered another son named George. Six months after George's birth, Obama died in 1982 in a car crash in Nairobi, his third since 1970. He was interred in his native village of Nyang'oma Kogelo, Siaya District. His funeral was attended by ministers Robert Ouko, Peter Oloo-Aringo and other prominent political figures.



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